

Remarks

Please cancel non-elected Group I claims 1-12. Please amend claim 13 as shown. Support for the amendment to claim 13 may be found, for example, in claim 14 as originally filed. Please cancel claim 14. Please also cancel claims 16-18, and please amend claim 15 as shown to correct for previous dependency from now-canceled claim 14. Therefore, as of this paper, claims 13, 15, 19 and 20 are in the case and are presented for Examiner Del Sole's consideration. Applicants specifically reserve the right to seek patent protection for non-elected and canceled subject matter by continuation or divisional application.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.111, reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank Examiner Del Sole for including in the Office Action mailed September 20, 2006 signed copies of the initialed Forms PTO-1449 sent with Applicants' Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) received by the Office on February 14, 2004 and May 11, 2005.

Applicants also thank Examiner Del Sole for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 19 and 20 in the Office Action mailed September 20, 2006.

Claims rejection, 35 U.S.C. §102(b) (Hodan et al. U.S. Patent 5,397,227)

By way of sections 4 and 5 of the Office Action mailed September 20, 2006, independent claim 13 and its dependent claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Hodan et al. U.S. Patent 5,397,227. Due to the current amendment of claim 13 incorporating the subject matter from claim 14, Applicants believe this rejection to be now moot because claim 14 formed no part of this rejection over Hodan et al. Applicants therefore respectfully request this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims rejection, 35 U.S.C. §102(b) (Meidhof U.S. Patent 5,531,587)

By way of section 6 of the Office Action mailed September 20, 2006, independent claim 13 and its dependent claims 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Meidhoff et al. U.S. Patent 5,531,587. This rejection is respectfully **traversed** to the extent applicable to the currently presented claims, as described in the remarks below.

The invention is directed to an apparatus for controlled-width extrusion. As presently claimed in independent claim 13, the invention includes an apparatus for extruding filaments, the apparatus including an extrusion die, a polymer supply in fluid communication with the extrusion die, a plurality of extrusion capillaries in the extrusion die, a plurality of counterbores in the extrusion die allowing fluid communication between the capillaries and the polymer supply, an adjustable insert for interrupting the fluid communication between the polymer supply and at least one of the extrusion capillaries. As claimed in claim 13, the insert is a rod having a substantially circular cross section and further having a plurality of spaced apart holes therethrough.

Although it was asserted in the Office Action that Meidhof teaches an insert having a rod-shaped cross section (Office Action, page 4, line 2), Applicants have reviewed the disclosure of Meidhof and are unable to find any insert which is not stated by Meidhof to be a plate, and there does not appear to be any teaching or even suggestion by Meidhof that the insert may be a rod having circular cross section. In fact, the only portion of the disclosure of Meidhof discussing possible deviation from plate shape is in column 2, lines 62-64 where it is stated that the bottom of the plate can be somewhat convex (instead of flat, presumably) to allow the bottom of the plate to adjust to the sealing surface. Therein, it is stated that the deviation or height difference describing this convex surface may be on the order of less than 1/10 of 1 millimeter. As such, this is not a description of a rod having substantially circular cross section. For this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that Meidhof does not disclose their invention as currently claimed in independent claim 13, and therefore submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Meidhoff should be withdrawn.

For the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are in form for allowance.

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Reply dated December 20, 2006
Reply to Office Action of: September 20, 2006

Please charge any prosecutorial fees which are due to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.
deposit account number 11 0875.

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Respectfully submitted,

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